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Sent: 10/23/2019 8:00:03 PM
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Subject: OGAP Weekly Report -- October 17 – October 23, 2019

OFFICE OF GLOBAL AFFAIRS AND POLICY
October 17 – October 23, 2019



G20 Global Network of the Committed (GNC) Meeting

Last week, OITA attended the first G20 Global Network of the Committed (GNC) meeting, hosted by the German government in Dresden, Germany. The GNC was instituted during Germany's presidency of the G20 in 2017 as an implementation body to help coordinate on-the-ground action between G20 countries with respect to the G20 marine litter action plan. This meeting brought together G20 member states and other stakeholders to discuss ongoing work in Vietnam by World Wildlife Fund Germany and how the GNC and others could help support that work and expand it to the lower Mekong region. The WWF Germany project is focused on implementing a labor-intensive source separation and waste collection and management system in Long-An Province, Vietnam. The U.S. provided expertise and shared tools to help the GNC better coordinate and implement on the ground action. The GNC hopes to meet again to discuss further implementation under the Saudi Arabia presidency. [Horan, Doroski]

Expansion of Trash Free Waters in Panama

Last week, an EPA team from OITA and Region 2 traveled to Panama to meet with the new government officials in the Ministry of Environment (MiAmbiente) to discuss advancing work on marine litter, solid waste, environmental impact assessments and public participation through an Interagency Agreement with the State Department for work under the CAFTA-DR trade agreement. The proposed work on marine litter and solid waste will support previous Trash Free Waters program work with Panama launched in November 2017 and will be incorporated into the Panama's National Action Plan for Marine Litter. EPA also met with Peace Corps Panama staff who agreed to roll out the Trash Free Waters toolkit to Peace Corps Volunteers (PCV) serving in Panama at a mid-service training to be held early 2020. EPA is interested in expanding Trash Free Waters to assist Panama in attracting larger investment opportunities, such as with Circulate Capital and the Alliance to End Plastic Waste to help finance larger, more complicated solid waste management projects. [Adrian, Gonzalez, Dimas]

Meeting with World Health Organization Staff on Air Quality and Health

OITA staff met virtually with WHO staff from the Department of Public Health, Environmental and Social Determinates of Health Office to follow up on progress made since WHO's First Air Quality and Health Conference last year. As a result of recognizing air quality as one of five main risk factors for non-communicable diseases and hosting the conference last year, the office has received a significantly increased demand from member states for resources, tools, and capacity

building to address air quality. WHO has two priority areas, or work streams, for its air quality work: indoor air pollution and ambient air pollution. One area of interest for further collaboration is WHO's development of "best buys" for air quality, a set of recommended interventions for member states to address air pollution as a risk factor for noncommunicable diseases. Staff will continue to follow up on joint areas of interest and continue the conversation on the broader environment and health portfolio. [Besch, Finman]

Arctic Council Icelandic Chairmanship Special Plastics Coordinator

The Arctic Council Secretariat hosted a discussion with the Icelandic Chairmanship Special Plastics Coordinator, Magnus Johannsen, on the Arctic Contaminants Action Program (ACAP) projects that contribute to reductions in marine plastic litter. OITA participated in the discussion and provided an overview of two projects being conducted by the Indigenous Peoples' Contaminants Action Program (IPCAP) that promote solid waste management: the *Kola Waste Project* and *Solid Waste Management in Remote Arctic Communities*. The Special Plastics Coordinator will be presenting to Senior Arctic Officials in November in Hveragerdi, Iceland to outline all efforts underway through the Arctic Council to address marine plastic litter. [Huber, Gay]

Interagency Call on Plastics

OITA participated in an interagency call led by State with staff from USAID, USTR, and NOAA to discuss and share initiatives regarding plastics. State, with assistance from OITA and OLEM, reported about the recent G20 Marine Litter Workshop and Resource Efficiency Dialogue in Tokyo. The staff lead for State's Green Diplomacy Initiative also explained recent efforts to include the composting of organic waste into their building contracts. State is in the process of organizing a 'Face the Waste' webinar series to raise awareness amongst State Department employees on plastic waste and waste management issues and policy. EPA (OITA, OLEM and OW), NOAA and USTR are being asked to deliver technical presentations on various topics dealing with solid waste management and marine litter. [Smith, Sims, Doroski]

International Lead Poisoning Prevention Week of Action (Oct 20-26)

This week is the International Lead Poisoning Prevention Week of Action, which is organized by the World Health Organization in conjunction with EPA, UN Environment and others, and includes a focus on promoting the elimination of lead paint. Information and materials distributed this week include a [UN News story on lead paint](#), a [WHO video on health impacts and sources of lead](#), an [article by the South African Medical Research Council](#) supporting lead paint phase out, and an OITA twitter campaign of international and tribal aspects of the week as part of a [robust cross-agency campaign](#). [Bandemehr]

World Bank and IMF Annual Meetings

OITA attended the World Bank and IMF annual Fall Meetings in Washington, DC. The Fall Meetings convene policy makers and economic and development professionals from all over the world to learn about and discuss prevalent issues in multilateral finance. OITA participated in discussions throughout the week with key players in the development finance arena. These meetings come at a pivotal inflection point for the Bank's operations as it begins to use its new Environmental and Social Framework. [Ferrante, Harrington, Ziegler]



Upcoming Events:

International Lead Poisoning Prevention Week of Action - Global outreach activities on lead paint, October 20-26